@ 15%. However metcoke imported by specified end users, namely, manufacturers of iron and steel using blast furnace or COREX technology and manufacturers of Ferro alloys, attracted a concessional rate of duty of 5%. The customs duty structure for metcoke was reviewed in Budget 2003-2004 and it was decided to rationalize the customs duty on metcoke to 10%, applicable to all imports.

Expenditure by Ministries in the financial year 2002-2003

†2682. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that less than allocated expenditure is likely to be spent by certain Ministries in the year 2002-2003 under the planned expenditure head;

(b) if so, the names of these Ministries; and

(c) the percentage of under-expenditure anticipated to be incurred by each of these Ministries so far?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) Total Plan expenditure upto February 28, 2003, was 78 per cent of the Budget Estimates. Details regarding actual expenditure for the full year 2002-03 will be available on compilation of the provisional accounts in July, 2003.

Delay in payment of pensions by SBI

2683. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA:
SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that credit advice for payment of monthly pension in respect of VRS-employees of Delhi Branches of the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Associate Banks of SBI are not released in time by their Head-quarters/Regional offices leading to avoidable delay and harassment to the pensioners;

(b) if so, whether Government would advise the concerned banks to ensure timely payment of pension on the last working day of the months as in the case of Central Government pensioners; and

(c) by when directions in this regard are proposed to be issued and implemented by the concerned banks?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) As per provisions contained in Regulation 54 of the Pension Regulations, pension fixed at a monthly rate shall be payable monthly on or after the first day of the following month. As per available information, the banks are releasing the pension to their employees including VRS optees as per the provisions contained in these Regulations.

(b) and (c) There is no proposal to advise the banks to modify their Pension Regulations for ensuring payment of pension on the last working day of the month as the rules and regulations governing pay, allowances and retiral benefits including pension for the bank employees are not comparable with those in the Central Government.

Opening of foreign currency account by Resident Indians

2684. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Resident Indians can now open a foreign currency account with a licensed/scheduled bank;

(b) what are the formalities that the Resident Indians have to comply with for opening of foreign currency account in India; and

(c) whether RBI have issued any guidelines in this regard; and if so, the details thereof?